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"*Glory o' the Dawn*"

"GLORY O' THE DAWN"

BY

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK

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TO MY FATHER
WHO NEVER PUT A BRUSH TO CANVAS
AND WHO IS HALE AND HEARTY ENOUGH
TO BEAT ME AT EVERY GAME
EXCEPT BILLIARDS

"Glory o' the Dawn"

"GLORY O' THE DAWN"

It must have been twenty-nine, no, thirty years ago that my father bought the Old Lighthouse Point at Middlehaven. He was among the earliest of the summer people to make a home in that part of Maine, and his purchase of the abandoned light and a hundred acres or more of rocks, blueberry bushes, and pasture land was something of an event in the annals of the town.

Middlehaven lies, as you know, on the shore of a heavily wooded island off the mouth of the Kennecataquis River. Its harbor is a

crescent which bites deeply into the northern shore of the island. The old light and my father's land marked the western end of the harbor, and from that rocky promontory, reaching up into the deep waters of Kennecataquis Sound, you could look across the harbor and read the history of the town with a single sweep of the eye.

Silhouetted against the woods on the hill behind the town stood a row of great square houses built in the days when New-Englanders were at home in all the seven seas. Some of these old mansions, when my father first went to Middlehaven, were beginning to fall into disrepair. They were no longer white with the spick-and-spanness

of New England, but weather-beaten and gray from neglect. To the east and the west of these relics of past greatness were scattered the smaller houses of the fishermen, whose industry, in the want of far adventures, kept the town alive. There was a none too picturesque street of small shops that ambled along behind the ramshackle piers, and in the waters of the harbor usually twenty or more fishing sloops and dingy trading schooners were waiting for the wind.

I have left the clearest page of Middlehaven's record until the last. Beyond the town, at the other end of the crescent from my father's land, lay what remained of a great shipyard. The masts of a few fish-

ing vessels and a coasting schooner under construction; the great gaunt ribs of an unfinished ship, blackened with years of sun and rain; and the marks where a dozen ways had once run from the yard into the harbor waters, were all that was left of an industry which once had made Middlehaven a name to conjure with among those who followed the sea. In the yard itself the gray-haired workmen told as clearly as the deserted ship of a trade which, after their passing, would be known no more.

This was the Middlehaven to which my father came three decades ago. There is a different Middlehaven now — a Middlehaven of country clubs and summer cot-

tages, of motor boats and motor cars, of strange new faces and sharply drawn social lines. I am glad that my boyhood was spent in the Middlehaven that was before the coming of King Gasoline.

We lived the first of our summers in the old light itself. Its stubby tower served on alternate days as a studio for my father and a playhouse for me. Some of our neighbors may have called my father "that cracked artist" when his back was turned, but most of them, I am sure, felt for him sympathy and understanding and made their feelings manifest by a hundred deeds of friendly kindness. It was to one of his neighbors that my father turned

for advice in his second summer at Middlehaven. He was planning to build a new stone studio on the seaward shore of his land. The design my father had drawn up himself, and he wished to find a mason who had, as he described it, "a feeling for rocks." "I want a man," he said, "who can build me a house without destroying the face of nature within a radius of twenty miles. I want a man who knows that it is bad for the health of a blueberry bush to cover it with plaster and lime. I want a man who would prefer not to drag a heavy beam through my pet nursery of young pines." Our neighbor observed my father quizzically and tolerantly. "I think I know what

you want, Mr. Tilton. You want a man to build you a house that will look as though it growed there. Better try and get Caleb Gurney." Then he added, after a pause, "That is, if he is working."

Father and I hoisted the sail of our dory and set out to find Caleb. We discovered him at last, sitting in the lee of the abandoned ship in the old yard. Great curls of clean shavings lay about his feet; the air was redolent with the smell of wood and the smoke from a stubby corncob pipe which hung at a perilous angle from Caleb's none too determined jaw. As nearly as I can remember, Caleb seemed to me then a man well past middle age. But I was only thirteen myself, and one's

views of middle age alter rapidly as the years go by. His face was round and full, his hair sandy gray. His skin was flushed and tightly drawn, and his eyes were blue and moist. His neck filled the collar of his flannel shirt to bursting. The picture he made, as I recall it, was not a prepossessing one, but there was a friendliness about his glance which made me instinctively trust him.

My father seated himself on the shavings. He lighted his own pipe before he spoke.

"They tell me, Mr. Gurney, that you're a fine mason."

"Folks hev said I was," Caleb guardedly replied.

"And I have generally found," my father went on, "that you peo-

ple here in Middlehaven, when you praise a man, don't err on the side of generosity. If Middlehaven says you are a good mason, you must be."

"Well, then, I be," said Caleb. "What was ye wantin' uv me?"

"I am going to build a new house over on the point," said my father, motioning across the harbor with his pipe, "and I want to get a man to do the work who will leave the point so that I can recognize it when he gets through. Do you want a try at the job?"

"I don't know but I might," said Caleb. "I ben workin' here at the shipyard quite a piece, but I'm 'bout through. I like stun work, but somehow every once in a while I get

a hankerin' to work in wood. My father was foreman in this yard, and his father afore him. I guess it's in the blood. Somehow, it don't seem right that this kind o' work should die out the way it's done." He shook himself as though to bring back his mind to the present and added: "I'll go with ye, Mr. Tilton — I've heard ye're a good man to work for — an' we'll hev a look at your plan."

A fair wind carried us back across the harbor. Caleb had taken the tiller as we stepped into the dory. His hand rested upon the helm as delicately as the fingers of a violinist rest upon his bow. Our wake across the harbor was straight and steady, though Caleb's eyes seemed

to ignore both our craft and the mark for which our course was laid.

"You're a good sailor, anyhow," my father said as our keel grated on the beach.

"If I wasn't, I'd be a lummox," said Caleb. "I was sailin' when this young-un here could 'a' put me in his pocket."

Father carried his plan out to the place which he had selected as the site of his studio and explained his wants briefly. When he had finished, Caleb wasted no words in questioning.

"We can bring our stun right here to the shore," he said, "in a scow. Put a pair o' shears on them rocks an' drop 'em right where we want 'em without bustin' a blade o'

grass. There's a big stun wall in Deacon Turner's pasture thet runs right down to the shore. We can hev it for takin' it away. Jeff Taylor has an ole sloop we can use as a scow. There's plenty o' water to bring her in here loaded at low tide, an', with thet long ledge out there to break the sea, we can work here 'most any day snug as ye please. And when we get the buildin' done folks'll trip over it without seein' it, it'll set here so natcherel."

Nothing was said of wages. The project changed swiftly from one which involved "my studio" to Caleb's more inclusive "our house." On what terms the work was prosecuted I do not know. I only know that Caleb undertook it as a man

undertakes a mission for a life-long friend. My father dropped his painting while the studio was building and labored side by side with his master mason. I, too, busied myself as best I could, fetching trowels, mixing mortar, and tailing on ineffectually when the heavy boulders which Caleb had selected were hoisted into place. Caleb worked as few men work nowadays. He chose the rocks, he pried them onto the stone-boat, he rigged the shears to hoist them to the sloop, and he adjusted the slings about them when they were hoisted from the sloop to the land. Some of the other workmen grumbled over his fussiness: his insistence upon the color and shape of the stones, his

foolishness in trying to save them from injury by crowbar or chain. The idea of guarding stones from scratches with burlap bags moved some of them to laughter. But they followed Caleb's directions to the letter.

Late in the summer, when the studio was finished, father sent out word to all his neighbors that he wanted them in for a housewarming. Caleb was to have the place of honor in this gathering, for my father had come to see that in his master mason he had found a fellow-artist. On the evening of the great event a dozen families or more rowed over to our point. Some of them brought deep blueberry pies, a pailful of doughnuts,

a basket of apples, a chocolate cake, gingerbread, and such delicacies as are native to Maine. One man, almost apologetically, brought over enough lobsters to feed half the crowd.

"The smack had all she could carry the last trip she made," he said, "and she wasn't payin' much for 'em, anyhow. So I thought I might as well boil 'em up and bring 'em over as let 'em lay around in the pound till next trip."

But there was no Caleb to partake of all this abundance. No one could or would explain his absence until my father found the neighbor who had recommended him. "I guess," he said, "Caleb must hev quit workin' for a spell. He has

been workin' almighty hard this summer, an' longer than he generally does. I wouldn't look for him too hard ef I was you."

My father did not heed our neighbor's advice. The next day he set out alone in his dory for Caleb's little shanty across the bay. It stood on a pine-covered knoll overlooking the shipyard. Once Caleb had lived in a comfortable old house near the site of his present home, but it burned down and he had fixed up an old shed for his bachelor needs.

When my father returned, his face was grave. He told me nothing save that Caleb was sick — it was not until a year or so after

that I learned the story of his visit. He had gone to Caleb's house and found the door barred. He pounded on it, and at last a shamefaced Caleb appeared in a half-open window.

"Ain't no use comin' fer me, Mr. Tilton," Caleb had said. "I ain't been well." The character of Caleb's illness was not one which could be concealed. "Just been celebratin' finishin' house," Caleb rambled on. "Need li'l' vacation."

"But, Caleb," my father started to protest—

"Goo'-bye," said Caleb, and shut the window with a bang.

A week later Caleb rowed across to our point, not to apologize in words for failing to come to our party, but, as he explained, to look

around to see if everything was satisfactory. When he left, he pulled from under the thwart of his boat a box, which he handed to me. "Just a little somethin' for the boy, Mr. Tilton; thought he might like to hev it as a meemento of Middlehaven."

Then he shoved off, and was a hundred yards from the shore before I could even thank him. When the box was opened, it proved to contain the model of a fishing sloop. It was barely a foot long, but beautifully finished in every detail. The hull was not carved from a single block, but framed and planked up with the nicest skill. It must have meant the labor of weeks to build and equip the tiny vessel.

So it was that we learned that Caleb was not only a mason and shipwright, but also a builder of models. When my father spoke of his workmanship to some of our neighbors, the only comments which he elicited were to the effect that "Caleb had a sight better build himself a decent house than waste all his spare time makin' jim-cracks."

That summer passed, and another and another. On evenings of days when Caleb had "been working," he used to row over to our point and sit with my father and me, discussing the world and his wife. His native shrewdness cut its way to a clear understanding of

people and issues in a fashion which any college graduate might well envy. As the summer population of Middlehaven grew, Caleb's comments upon the new faces provided us with a most illuminating record of the course of events. But Caleb's chief interest lay, not with the new, but with the old.

In the twilight the skeleton of the old ship across the harbor seemed to awaken his mind to a thousand forgotten things. He peopled the shadowy yard with living figures of a past that he had never known, recounted the story of ships that had taken form there under skillful hands, the lives and loves of their captains, and the tragedies of vessels that never returned.

We never saw Caleb at all during the spells when he was, to use the euphemism of our neighbor, "not working." His absences from our companionship were never alluded to, a thing for which I think he was profoundly grateful. The only comment which any of our neighbors ever made to my father on his friendship with Caleb was made by the village grocer. One day while my father was in the store and waiting for his change the grocer paused in the wrapping up of a loaf of bread, gazed off towards a bunch of bananas as though it constituted his chief interest in life, and said, with an absent air:

"They do tell me, Mr. Tilton, that Caleb Gurney works a heap

sight more sence ye came to Middlehaven. It's a durn shame ye don't live here in winter too."

It must have been my first year at college that Caleb's dream of old Middlehaven began to express itself in reality. It was then, I think, that I remember seeing for the first time a great long bench which filled to overflowing the center of his single-room shack. On this bench stood part of the frame of a ship. The timbers of this eight-foot vessel were not the only evidence that Caleb's home had been turned into a miniature shipyard. On the wall behind his tumbled bed hung yellowed tracings which showed at a glance the source of Caleb's inspi-

ration. Under the thumb marks which edged the drawings I made out the name of the ship which Caleb was laboring to reproduce. Of its beauty lovers of old ships will need to know nothing more than that the plans bore the legend "Glory o' the Dawn."

"When they tore the old sail loft down," said Caleb, "to build the new yacht club, I come across them plans hid away in the bottom of a barrel. Nobody seemed to want 'em, so I brought 'em home with me. Then last winter I got a-hankerin' to see if I couldn't build a ship thet old 'Glory' herself would be proud to claim as sister. First off I began workin' with what wood I could find handy, an' I got my

model pretty well framed up afore I said to myself, 'This ain't goin' t' do. No, sir, soft stuff ain't good enough for my "Glory." She's gotta be fit to sail from here to Chiny. She's gotta be finished even better than they finished ships in them days, when they meant more to their captains than home and mother. Her timbers is goin' to be uv oak; she's goin' to be planked with elum; her decks will be the clearest white pine I can find; her tr'nn'ls 'll be locust — maybe even ivory; and teak ain't none too good fer her houses and her rail. Her sticks will be spruce or Oregon fir and her fitten's will be brass throughout.' So I up an' smashed my first model with an axe an' I

laid the keel o' this one last January — the 8th it was."

"You've got a life job ahead of you, Caleb," I said, "if you finish her up the way you have begun. Are you planning to do the whole thing to scale?"

"Everythin'," said Caleb, "from stem to taffrail, from main truck to keel. I've got calipers accurate enough so's I can measure her riggin' to the thousandth of an inch. They come high, but I had to hev 'em."

That first year saw the frame of "Glory o' the Dawn" almost completed. There were weeks when Caleb did no work at all save to potter around, looking for timbers

and natural knees that exactly suited his requirements. When one of his old cronies was injudicious enough to suggest, "Why in tarnation don't ye saw 'em or steam 'em? Nobody ain't goin' t' see 'em after she's planked up," it resulted in a free fight which left Caleb's friend as bewildered as to the cause of Caleb's anger as he was battered as to his own countenance. But Caleb kept his plans to himself. I think that my father and I were the only ones to glimpse the determined dream behind his pale-blue eyes.

It was not until three years later, indeed, that even I began to see the whole of Caleb's plan, and I made

my discovery by pure chance. In the dusk of a late September evening I had gone to Caleb's to say good-bye before I started back to the city to take up work as a cub reporter. I walked into Caleb's shack without knocking, for the door stood open. He sat with his back to the entrance, his hands clasped about his knees and his eyes fixed on the concave forefoot of the new "Glory o' the Dawn." In the yellow lamplight he looked strangely old. I had not noticed before how thin his hair had grown, and how gray.

Caleb was talking to himself as I started to enter, and, without meaning to eavesdrop, I stood for a minute or so listening to his half-

mumbled words. It was the speech of a man who has lived much alone and who has learned the dangerous habit of conjuring up spectral visitors.

"Well, 'Glory,' ole girl," I heard him say, "they went an' busted up the shipyard; they went an' filled the harbor with bo'ts made o' gingerbread an' paint, thet come a-scurryin' back to their moorin's afore it blows hard enough to muss a woman's hair. Not much like ye, them yachts. I'd like to see one o' them bo'ts beatin' 'round the Horn an' up to Californy in ninety-two days! Thet's what ye done, ole girl! Praise be there's some as ain't forgot it! Maybe some day—"

He turned and caught sight of me. "Why, hello, Bob," he said, sheepishly. "I thought I was alone, an' I was just talkin' to this ole girl here, to sort o' pass the time o' day. Ye must uv thought me plumb cracked."

"Cracked nothing, Caleb," I said. "You were just thinking out loud. We all of us do that sometimes. How goes the work?"

"Not so bad," said Caleb, "an' not so good. I hev got her hull most finished, as ye can see, but I can't seem to lay my hands on just the kind o' deck fittin's I need. Guess I'll hev to get me a lathe an' turn 'em out myself. Now them davies there ain't right at all. Accordin' to my measurin', they're a sixteenth

of an inch too high, an' the wrong shape to boot. I hain't even been able to make a start on the riggin'. They don't make no line laid up just right for shrouds or stays. I guess I'll hev to get some thread an' start a ropewalk of my own."

"Isn't that drawing things pretty fine, Caleb?"

"Ain't nothin' jest right ef it ain't jest so," said Caleb, and I knew that "Glory o' the Dawn" would never be launched if her builder's heart could not be satisfied.

It was this meticulous attention to detail that made the building of "Glory" so long a process — this and the fact that the town's one

hotel had come to an agreement with the local political boss whereby one of the laws of Maine was honored in the breach rather than in the observance. In the basement of the hotel a bar had been set up, and it flourished like a green bay tree. Once a year, or oftener if the town fathers were hard up for cash, the bar was raided with all due ceremony, fines assessed, and the proprietor promptly released to return to his lucrative trade. Some of the money that Caleb might have spent for fittings found its way across the brass rail. His neighbors told me that he never returned to his shack on nights when he had been patronizing the bar. I guessed, though I did not say, that when the fit was

on him he feared for the safety of "Glory o' the Dawn."

The evening of Caleb's unintended revelation he and I talked for a while, though most of our conversation was made up of those silences which old friends interpret as discourse. At last, with a shake of his hand and a "See you next summer," I went into the night.

It was not next summer, nor the summer after, that I saw Caleb again. With the death of my father and my own efforts to make a place for myself in the world of journalism, it was six years before I went back to Middlehaven. During these years my house on the Old Lighthouse Point had been rented to

a summer family that knew not Caleb. Once, indeed, when he had rowed across to dig himself some clams on the beach near the studio that he had built, they had ordered him off in language which it is unwise to use to a son of Maine — particularly when he happens to be within his legal rights. But I heard nothing of this from Caleb. The news only came to me as a bit of local gossip upon my return.

It was to Caleb's shack that I hastened as soon as I had put foot upon the new steamboat pier at Middlehaven. The town had changed much in six years. The stores had a prosperous air; the main street was paved; and a dozen new houses had sprung up in

Caleb's neighborhood. But his home was as I had left it.

I found him seated in a rocking-chair set in the midst of his unkempt yard, its tangled grass and weed-grown garden contrasting strangely with the carefully landscaped grounds of summer cottages on either side.

He greeted me as though I had only been away for a week's cruise, and I accepted the casualness of his welcome as the tribute to an understanding friendship. Six years had altered him more than his house. His cheeks were sunken and his shabby clothes hung on his heavy frame in loose folds. We talked for a while of my father and of our old neighbors, and then I asked: "And

'Glory,' has she been launched yet?"

He seemed to grow a dozen years younger as he answered: "Come in an' look at her, boy. She will do your heart good."

Inside the shack I found the masts of "Glory o' the Dawn" towering above me in the dim light. The network of rigging, the yards, many of the sails even, were in place. I caught my breath at the beauty of the workmanship.

I walked around "Glory o' the Dawn" without saying a word. She was too perfect for praise. From the gilded figure of Aurora at her stem to her taffrail, from her main truck to her keel, she was a clipper of clippers — the symbol

and spirit of an age which would never come again. All I could find to say was: "Well, Caleb, you've done it."

"Thet's what 'most everybody seems to think — now," said Caleb. "Some of 'em says it in looks, some of 'em in words, an' some of 'em," he chuckled, "tries to say it in money."

"I suppose there must have been quite a few people that wanted to buy her," I said, feeling somehow as though I were speaking to a man about the sale of his wife.

"There has. Only last week Judge Talbot druv up in his machine an' asked if he could see my ship. 'Nothin' to hinder ye,' said I; 'walk in.' He looked her over with-

out so much as sayin' thank ye, grunted an' puffed a bit, an' then said, 'Give ye $10,000 for your place with this bo't thrown in, or give ye $10,000 for the bo't with the place thrown in.' 'Judge Talbot,' says I, 'nothin' hindered ye comin' in, an' now there ain't nothin' hinderin' ye goin' out.' I give him a push an' shut the door behind his back. They said downtown thet he was hoppin' mad. Served him right, though. He'd ought t' know that there's some things thet can't be bought."

Caleb was silent for a few minutes, and then went on:

"But there was another feller here last year thet wanted her, an' he sort o' set me thinkin'. He knew

ships, thet feller. 'Curator,' he said he was, of a museum to the west-'ard. Said he hed to look after a big buildin' which had nothin' in it but relics of old shippin' days. There was models of whalers there, he said, cases of scrimshaw work, an' walls jest covered with ol' picters of the best ships thet ever was on the sea. He come o' seafaring folks, an' there wasn't nothin' thet missed his eye. He kept walkin' round her an' round her, lookin' for somethin' to pick me up on. Finally he says, slow-like, 'Thet sailor-binnacle there — I don't think "Glory o' the Dawn" carried one like thet. I think ye got thet design from' — 'The "N. B. Palmer,"' says I. 'Right,' says he. 'I'd know thet

sailor there with his shiny tarpaulin hat an' standin' with one foot on a keg o' beer if I met him in the Sahary Desert. How in blazes did ye draw thet compass card so fine?' 'I didn't draw it,' says I, 'I had a photygraph made from an ol' compass an' reduced to fit.' 'My word,' says he, an' starts walkin' round her again.

"Finally, jest as he was goin', he says to me: 'We hev got a new room in our museum. We're goin' to put in it the best things we got. Thet ship o' yours would look fine right in the center.' 'She would,' says I, 'but she won't.' 'Think it over,' he said, shakin' my hand. 'If you let me hev her, she will be where thousands can see her an' en-

joy her every year.' 'They could, but I couldn't,' says I. 'I understand,' says he, 'but let me know if ye change your mind.'

"I liked thet feller. He didn't so much as mention money. I could see thet, so far as him an' 'Glory' was concerned, it was a case uv love at first sight. An', as I said afore, it sort o' set me thinkin'."

I knew what Caleb's thoughts were, but I did not voice them. It is not a tactful thing to ask a man what will become of his property after he is gone. But Caleb did not wait to be questioned.

"It sort o' set me thinkin'," he repeated. "Here I hev spent a good part o' my life buildin' this 'Glory o' the Dawn.' I hevn't any chil-

dren to leave her to, an' maybe they wouldn't understand her if I had. She'd ought t' set here in Middlehaven, but she ain't goin' t' decorate no millionaire's summer cottage, if I hev to smash her with an axe. She sort o' belongs to the town in a way, even if the town don't know it. Sometimes I think I'd like to hev her settled afore I go; sometimes I feel thet it would kill me if she went out o' this house. Bob, what do you think?"

I tried hard to put my thoughts into words which would not hurt Caleb's feelings. I am afraid that I made rather a clumsy mess of it. "Caleb," I said, "this ship is more than a splendid model. It is as you have meant it to be, a remembrance

of great days. Some time, perhaps, this town will wake up to the fact that it was once something more than a playground for summer folk and that its people once did things more worth while than catering to the needs of even the most estimable of idlers. There's the same blood here that once found the whole world almost too small for its inheritance. Nobody asks of Middlehaven that it should be off to the Indies again; but somehow, some day, Middlehaven must apply its old courage and its old spirit of adventure to the needs of our time. It may be a foolish dream, but somehow it seems to me that this ship of yours should be left where it can carry the message of old Middle-

haven to the Middlehaven that may yet be."

Caleb had not moved while I was talking; I even doubted whether he heard all that I said. But when I had finished, he looked up, and I knew that he had understood.

"Bob," he said, "somehow I'll find a way."

That fall a group of the summer people decided that Middlehaven needed a public library. They brought up a celebrated architect from New York, who went over the town and selected the site for the building. It was to be of brick, with a great white Colonial porch that looked out over the harbor. It is a matter of record that the com-

mittee had some trouble in buying the site, for the chairman went to the owner of the lot that had been selected with a brusque "We want to build a library on that corner lot of yours. Of course you will sell it." Negotiations thus begun did not progress rapidly. "If they'd only as't me to sell it to 'em as part o' my contribution to the library, I'd hev done it right off," the owner of the lot afterwards said. "But they sort o' gave it out thet I had to sell it because they wanted to buy it, an' I don't hev to do nothin' thet I don't want to."

A more gracious diplomacy triumphed in the end, and the cornerstone of the library was laid before the summer people departed. It

was roofed in before snow flew, and the opening day was set for the following July. My vacation took me back to Middlehaven again a few weeks before that opening. As I went up the path to Caleb's house I met him coming out. There was a determined look in his pale-blue eyes, and his hand, as it touched mine, trembled strangely. "I want you should come with me, Bob," he said.

"Why, where are you going, Caleb?"

"I'm going over to see Judge Talbot. There's a meeting of the Libr'y Committee at his house to-night, an' I've got to be there," he answered.

I tried to get to the bottom of the

affair with a feeble joke. "Since when have you been on the committee?"

"Never was on the committee, an' ain't never goin' to be on the committee. There ain't no real Middlehaveners on thet committee. Sometimes it seems as though this libr'y was goin' to be given to the town the same as ye would give a bone to a dog. But there's one dog as is goin' to bark at least once afore he's done."

He did not vouchsafe any further information even when the crushed limestone on Judge Talbot's driveway crunched under our feet. He rang the bell, and he and I were shown by a somewhat astonished butler into Judge Talbot's

den and the presence of the committee.

There sat the Judge, his face, it seemed, more choleric than ever as it rose like a red autumnal sun from the snowy whiteness of his Palm Beach suit. Judge Talbot nodded to me, but his gaze was fixed on Caleb. Most of the members of the committee I knew, and some of them even knew me. I doubt whether this could be said of old lady Minturn, who sat on the Judge's right — "Cat's-Meat Minturn," the Middlehaveners had called her since she first settled in their midst. She won the name by approaching the butcher with a "Give me some cheap meat such as the natives eat. It's for my cat."

I turned from my survey of the room to find the Judge and Caleb casting doubtful glances at each other. Caleb was nervously twisting his hat in his hands; the Judge was obviously wondering why the butler had let us in.

"I suppose," he said at last, "you have come to see me about your boat. Decided to sell it, eh?"

"It is about the ship," said Caleb, slowly, "but I ain't figurin' on sellin' it. I know ye folks is givin' the town a libr'y, an' it's got a big hall in the middle uv it. I was sort o' thinkin' thet mebbe ye would like 'Glory o' the Dawn' to put in thet hall."

The Judge was plainly startled. The dollar value of Caleb's ship

he knew even if he did not know its cost in dreams. "Why, that's mighty fine of you, Caleb — Mr. Gurney. I am sure our committee will be delighted to have it."

"I wasn't figurin' on givin' it to the committee," said Caleb. "I wanted to give it to the libr'y when it belonged to the town."

"Of course, of course," said Judge Talbot, "we understand that perfectly." His eye invited the acquiescence of his fellow committee members. Most of them knew Caleb's ship by reputation if not by sight, and they all nodded approval. Old lady Minturn even went so far as to say that she thought it would look "just too pretty for anything."

Caleb was invited to sit and dis-

cuss his gift. He sank into a great leather armchair, still clinging tightly to his twisted hat. The beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead and the knuckles of his hands were white.

Before we took our departure even the details of the transfer had been almost irretrievably arranged. Judge Talbot believed in striking while the iron was hot. I think that before the evening was over he sensed a little of the sacrifice that Caleb was making. At least when we turned to go he shook hands with Caleb with a cordiality which surprised me. I doubt whether Caleb noticed the change. Beyond the thought that he had agreed to part forever with "Glory o' the

Dawn" I do not think that his mind was aware of what had passed, of what he had said or what had been said to him. When we at last went out into the night, he leaned heavily on my arm as he stumbled down the driveway. I felt tears strike my hand more than once, but neither he nor I spoke until we reached his house. Then it was just "Good-night, Bob," and "Good-night, Caleb," and I turned away without trusting myself to say more.

Between the evening at Judge Talbot's and the day set for the dedication of the library I saw little of Caleb. I kept away from his house, partly because I felt there was nothing I could do which would

help to make the coming separation from "Glory o' the Dawn" easier for him, and partly because of an occurrence which did not bode well for Caleb.

It was the very next day after the meeting of the Library Committee that a schooner bearing a deck-load of unsavory fish dropped anchor in Middlehaven harbor. There was more interest in the doings of that schooner than its apparent cargo might lead one to suppose. At dusk a dozen or more rowboats could be seen clustered about her, bargaining for fish—fish that the next morning were to be found floating in the harbor waters or left high and dry on the beach by the receding tide. The

schooner, having finished her business and emptied her hold of sundry boxes containing nothing which ever came out of the sea, departed on her way — some three hours before a patrol-boat flying the flag of the Treasury Department appeared on the scene. Concerning her after history I know nothing and concerning her cargo almost as little. I only know that Judge Talbot's launchman was among those present when she discharged her load; I know that the hotel-keeper was also represented, and that there was an unaccustomed hilarity along the water-front of Middlehaven for several days after the schooner's departure. I know, too, that part at least of one case

found its way to Caleb's house. Broken as he was by his impending loss, it was not to be wondered at that he gave in to the thing which meant at least a brief forgetfulness. Of course I should have stayed with him at this time, but something of that old reluctance, which I had shared with my father, to recognize a side of Caleb so discordant with the character which he had shown to us made me fear to intrude.

When the day for the dedication of the library came, I went to his house with a group of old friends from the town. I did not find that the Middlehaveners were as enthusiastic as they might have been over this prospect of a ceremonial gathering in Caleb's front yard.

For obvious reasons he did not stand very high in the estimate of the townspeople. Added to this, the prospect of playing second fiddle to the Library Committee, which had arranged for the gathering, did not increase the attractiveness of the affair. The only Middlehaveners who had any official part in the arrangements were the three selectmen, and the rôle which had been assigned to them was very largely that of passive recipients.

When we arrived, it was to find that Caleb's house had been festooned with red-white-and-blue bunting. Three or four girls of the summer colony were tacking up the last strips as we approached. Caleb himself sat in the old rocker

on his doorstep. He was dressed in an ancient suit which once had been black, but which showed almost green in the hot sun which beat down mercilessly upon the little gathering. He did not seem to see the people around him; he did not even stop rocking to and fro when one of the girls who had been decorating his house stooped and pinned a rose in his buttonhole. I was close behind him as she did it, and I heard her say: "Mr. Gurney, we all think you are just wonderful, really we do. You are giving lots more to the library than all the other people put together." But Caleb only rocked and twisted his handkerchief in his hands. I stepped beside him and put my hand on his shoulder. "It's all

right, Caleb," I said; "you are doing a mighty big thing." He reached up, touched my hand for an instant, and then went on rocking back and forth. But his eyes never left the model of "Glory o' the Dawn," which stood, sails set as for a far voyage, in the center of his weed-grown yard.

"Glory o' the Dawn" was supported at either end by a flag-draped saw horse, and behind her a stand some six feet high had been erected, large enough to contain half a dozen chairs and a table bearing a white pitcher of ice-water. The stand as well as the house had been hung with bunting. As I stood at Caleb's side and looked through the lofty spars of his vessel to this

platform, decked out in Fourth of July magnificence, I had the feeling that the whole setting of the scene was strangely inappropriate. It seemed to me almost as though this flimsy stand upon which the pitiable old man beside me was to mount should have been hung in the black of a scaffold rather than the gay colors of our National holiday.

While I stood there the schoolgirls, dressed in white muslin, had grouped themselves in a restless half-circle between us and the ship. On one side of the yard there were perhaps twenty or thirty men and women of the summer colony, chatting and laughing among themselves. In this group there were

some with golf bags in their hands. Obviously they had stopped to see the sight on their way to the country club. I noticed one fresh-faced college boy in white flannels gazing intently at the ship and then at Caleb. At last he laid his clubs on the ground and walked over to Caleb's chair. "That's a beautiful ship of yours, Mr. Gurney," he said. "I want to thank you for my share in the gift you are making." He flushed a little and went on, "You know, Middlehaven means a lot to some of us—maybe more than we mean to Middlehaven." Caleb took his outstretched hand, mumbled a few words, and the boy slipped back among his friends.

In a separate group on the other

side of the yard stood and sat perhaps an equal number of people from the town. Somehow they seemed to have an even greater air of detachment from the proceedings than the summer people themselves. Few of them had anything in common with Caleb; fewer still felt that the summer people had anything in common with them.

There was a lull in the chatter on both sides of the yard. Judge Talbot beckoned to the selectmen, and with two members of his committee mounted the platform. When the others were seated, he advanced to the edge and, looking through the rigging of "Glory o' the Dawn," waved a friendly but rather ponderous hand to the circle

of children. "I think," he said, "that we would like to start this brief ceremony by singing the 'Star-Spangled Banner.' We want you children to start the song and the grown-ups will join in — if they can."

The children struggled to their feet and, under the leadership of a teacher with a pitch-key, launched themselves boldly into song. When the shrill notes had died away — few deeper voices had joined in — Judge Talbot wiped his forehead with a silk handkerchief, drank a glass of water, and began his heavy-footed remarks. I doubt if any one remembers much of what he said. Certainly all that I can recall are his concluding words:

"And now, citizens of Middlehaven, let us stand in honor of the man who has given the chief adornment of our new library. Mr. Gurney, we want you here on the platform beside us."

Caleb shook himself, stood, swayed, and caught my arm. The half-circle of school-children opened, and we moved together towards the platform. I felt Caleb's hand trembling as though he were stricken with the palsy.

He let go my arm, caught the edge of the platform, stumbled up the steps, clutched Judge Talbot, and then leaned heavily on the table. I do not think that he saw anything of the circle of curious faces grouped in a half-moon behind the

vessel of his dreams. Judge Talbot stepped forward again, touched Caleb's shoulder and called, "Now three cheers for Mr. Gurney." Again the shrill cries of the children drowned out their elders' voices. The patter of polite applause which followed soon died away.

Judge Talbot glanced a bit anxiously at Caleb, fumbled at his watch, and announced that "after Mr. Gurney has said a few words we will adjourn to the library for the dedication. Members of the Library Committee and the selectmen will head the procession, and this beautiful boat will be carried in state on the float we have prepared. I trust you will all fall in

behind." He turned and in quieter tones said, "Now, Mr. Gurney, just a few words and we will be on our way. You are going to ride with me in my automobile."

Caleb had hardly moved during the welcome which he had received save that his body swayed to and fro as if he were balancing himself on the deck of a plunging ship. At Judge Talbot's words he moved forward to the edge of the platform, his eyes fixed on "Glory o' the Dawn." He wet his lips with his tongue, but we heard no sound. Incessantly his hands worked and twisted at the knotted handkerchief which he held. Twice he opened his mouth as though to speak, but no word

came forth. The people on the platform behind him pushed back their chairs and started down the steps to the ground. Single figures broke away from the fringes of the gathering. From down the street towards the library came the blare of the village band. The schoolchildren scrambled to their feet, whispering and craning their necks.

Still Caleb stood, as though his mind were in a haze, as though his pale-blue eyes saw nothing but the beauty of his ship below him. Judge Talbot looked at his watch again and touched Caleb on the arm. "Just a few words, Mr. Gurney; we must go." At that moment from the group of summer people broke out the tittering giggle of a young

girl. I do not think that she was laughing at Caleb; she had merely given way to that youthful hysteria which is born of embarrassment. But the sound of her voice seemed to break the spell which had bound Caleb speechless. He turned towards her and his face flushed.

"She's laughin' at me! She's laughin' at my ship!" His hands clinched. "By God, ye ain't none o' ye fittin' to hev my 'Glory'!" The sweep of his arms took in the whole of the astonished gathering with his menace. "By God, if I can't keep her I'll smash her all to hell."

The amazed Judge saw him snatch the water-pitcher from the table, raise it over his head, and

hurl it downward into the mass of delicate spars and more delicate rigging. It grazed the hull and shattered on the ground. Just as Caleb reached for a chair Judge Talbot seized his wrist.

"Don't you tech me!" cried Caleb, wildly. "Don't you tech me! I'll smash my own ship if I want to!"

Caleb's sudden fury gave to his arms a strength which the Judge could not withstand. The end of the struggle came before any of us could reach the platform.

The two men, fighting for the possession of the chair, stumbled over the edge of the stand and crashed down upon the unsupported midship section of "Glory

o' the Dawn." There was a splintering of wood and then the two bodies slipped to the earth. Judge Talbot, bruised, scratched, and groaning, rose to his feet. But Caleb did not move.

What happened then I hardly know, save that I found myself with Caleb's head in my lap. A doctor pushed forward from the crowd which had closed about us, tore open Caleb's shirt, and laid his ear to Caleb's heart. Then he looked up at the excited faces about us and said, "Better stand back there a bit, please. Gurney is gone."

I have been told that the tragedy of Caleb's death has sunk deep into the consciousness of Middlehaven.

It was a woman who wrote me of the change in the spirit of the town, and I am not certain of the clearness of her judgment. Single events, I am afraid, seldom alter deep-rooted conditions. I know nothing at first hand, for I have never gone back to Middlehaven since the day that Caleb was buried.

THE END

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